



(Photo by Command Sgt. Maj. Norman Corbett 1-14 Cavalry Regiment)

## Sunday stroll

Cavalry paratroopers from 1st Squadron, 40th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, move through Adamiyah, Iraq as part of Operation Yukon River April 12.

## DoD unveils compensation program for long deployments

By Sgt. Sara Wood  
USA American Forces Press  
Service

WASHINGTON - The Defense Department April 18 unveiled a program that will reward administrative leave to service members whose service in combat does not meet the department's goal for the time at home station between deployments. DoD has had a policy since 2004 that pays service members who are extended in theater beyond 12 months \$1,000 a month. That policy is still in effect.

"What I have been told by finance

and the (Multi-National Division - Baghdad human resources and administrative office), is that if we are officially extended by the Secretary of Defense then we will still receive an additional \$200 per month hardship duty pay and \$800 a month in assignment incentive pay, which is the \$1,000 we have all been hearing about," said Capt. Jon Flores, the Division Special Troops Battalion personnel officer.

Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates directed the development of the new reward program Jan. 19, when he implemented a force management policy stating that DoD's goal was to give active-

duty troops two years at home station for every year deployed, and reserve component troops five years at home station for every year deployed.

Under the new policy, active-duty service members who are deployed for more than 12 months in a 36-month period will earn one day of administrative absence for each month beyond 12. If service members are deployed for more than 18 months in a 36-month period, they will earn two days of a month. Past 24 months, they will earn four days a month. Members of the reserve compo-

# Spur of the moment

(Photos by Spc. Jeffrey Ledesma 1st Cav. Public Affairs)

**"With the recent announcement of the deployment extension for troops on the ground, what do you plan on doing with the extra money?"**



"Harley parts because my Harley's got to look pretty, got to get it up to standard. I can't have it looking like it just came out of the store. I bought it during my deployment here."

## Staff Sgt. Heather Hapanowich

A native of Orlando, Fla., and retention noncommissioned officer with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 89th Military Police Brigade



## Spc. Alexander Klus

A native of Kirkland, Ill., and a cook with Company B, 1st Battalion, 34th Armor Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division

"(I'm) saving up for a house in Illinois, it's where I was before I joined and it's where I'm going to live after."

"If we get extended, I'll probably use the money to furnish and improve a house I want to buy back at Fort Hood."



## 1st Lt. Randall Bittner

A native of St. Joseph, Mich., and a military police officer with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 89th Military Police Brigade

"I am going to get a car. I'm not sure what kind, but I'm getting one."



## Cpl. Matthew Burke

A native of Avon, N.Y., and a infantryman with Company A, 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division

## Arabic Phrase of the Day

hudaud

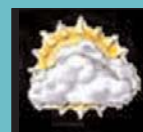
**Defined:**  
border

## Iraq 3-Day Weather Report



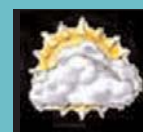
Today

High: 81  
Low: 66



Tomorrow

High: 82  
Low: 61



Sunday

High: 82  
Low: 66

**Commanding General:** Maj. Gen. Joseph F. Fil, Jr.  
**Public Affairs Officer:** Lt. Col. Scott Bleichwehl  
**Command Information Supervisor:** Master Sgt. Dave Larsen  
**NCOIC, Print Production:** Sgt. Michael Garrett  
**Editor:** Spc. Shea Butler  
**Staff Writers:** Sgt. Nicole Kojetin, Spc. L.B. Edgar, Spc. Jeffrey Ledesma, Pfc. Ben Gable, Pfc. William Hatton  
**Contributing Writer:** Sgt. 1st Class Kap Kim, Sgt. Sara Wood

Contact the *Daily Charge* at VOIP 242-4093, DSN 318-847-2855 or e-mail [david.j.larsen@mnd-b.army.mil](mailto:david.j.larsen@mnd-b.army.mil).

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(U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Tierney Nowland)

## R & R.... Get it while you can!

Soldiers from Company B, 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, take a nap at Forward Operating Base Union after conducting raids in Baghdad's Mansour district April 3.

# New program explanation

DoD

From Page 1

nents will earn one day of administrative absence a month for every month beyond 12, two days if they are mobilized past 18 months, and four days if they are mobilized past 24 months in a 72-month period.

Administrative absences are days off authorized by the commander, and are separate from normal leave accrued by a service member.

In a Pentagon news conference announcing the policy, Michael Dominguez, principal deputy undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, said that this program is meant to recognize the sacrifices service members make, but is in no way trying to put a physical value on their service.

"This program can't be viewed as being commensurate with the level of service that they offer to the nation. In many respects, while it is substantive and it is tangible, it's also symbolic. It's part

of our recognition that we're keeping them in our thoughts and we're trying to do something for them," he said.

The policy is retroactive to Jan. 19, so any service member who was deployed or involuntarily mobilized from that day forward, whose service exceeds the time frame in the policy, will earn the days off, Dominguez said.

Also, any troops who were deployed within the last three years, and are deployed now, will earn administrative leave for their current deployment, he said. In deciding what compensation to give service members who are deployed more frequently than DoD would like, defense officials considered a range of options, Dominguez said. Monetary compensation was considered, but time off seemed the logical choice.

The administrative leave service members earn under this policy will stay with them through their military career and can be used anytime, with commander approval, he said.

## Baghdad in Brief

### Another car bomb strikes killing five, wounding 10

BAGHDAD - A vehicle-borne improvised explosive device detonated in the Rusafa security district of central Baghdad April 19, killing five Iraqi civilians and wounding 10 others.

Soldiers from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division reported hearing an explosion at approximately 1:30 p.m. while occupying a combat outpost in the Karadah Peninsula area. The unit quickly sent a patrol to the site and reported five Iraqi civilians killed and ten wounded.

Iraqi Army and Iraqi police quickly responded and took over security of the site.

This attack follows the day after four car bombs struck the Iraqi capital April 18, killing 150 Iraqi civilians and wounding more than 200 others.

These incident is under investigation.

# 'Spartans' send new NCOs through rite of passage

By Sgt. 1st Class Kap Kim  
2-1 Cav. Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE PROSPERITY, Iraq - In the recent epic movie about the ancient Spartan's, where a young boy was sent in the wild with no food, no clothes and with only his will to survive, he grew up to be a great warrior who would lead a nation to glory.

If that served as inspiration for the modern-day Spartans of the 2nd Brigade Special Troops Battalion, they laughed on those Spartans' right-of-passage when they decided to step up their own non-commissioned officer indoctrination with tougher, more grueling tasks such as calling for a medical evacuation, putting together an M-4 rifle, and a Soldier cohesion exercise during a ceremony here April 10.

According to Sgt. 1st Class Matt Villanueva, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd BSTB, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, the NCO induction ceremony is their battalion's way of formally introducing them into the NCO Corps. This is the second time the Spartan Battalion has had the ceremony, and tries plans on doing this once every quarter to formally wel-

come every new NCO.

"When I did it, back when I was a corporal, it was traumatic," recalled the Pueblo, Colo., native. "The biggest difference now is that it's an anti-hazing format."

The NCOs, more than a dozen of them throughout the battalion and HHC, 2nd BCT, received an in-ranks inspection from 1st Sgt. Darryl Teramano, the top noncommissioned officer for Co. B, 2nd BSTB. As he found deficiencies, he made each NCO drop and do 25 push-ups.

After the inspection, they broke off into smaller groups and went from station to station performing a multitude of tasks ranging from calling in a medevac to reassembling an M-4 rifle while blind-folded, and a cohesion-building course.

During each of the stations, other NCOs, who led the stations, inserted a little calisthenics while the inductees were performing their individual tasks. Staff Sgt. Yamil Villafane, HHC, 2nd BSTB, put the inductees on their backs and made them do the "dying cockroach."

According to Sgt. Jeffrey Bauer, HHC, 2nd BSTB of Fort Towson, Okla., the experience was a "great" one.

"This really opened my eyes on the things I need to do to take care of my



**Cpl. Allan Timmons, a member of HHC, 2nd BSTB 2nd BCT, 1st Cav. Div., lights a torch as a part of the hall of the seven Army values during the NCO induction ceremony on Forward Operating Base Prosperity in Baghdad April 10.**

Soldiers," he said. "I think it was a great experience."

After all the tasks were done, the inductees called over to the hall of the seven leadership values.

The hall was constructed of seven torches. Each inductee had to drink from the ceremonial grog before he or she was to be considered in joining the rest of the battalion's NCOs on the other side.

During the ceremony, Sgt. 1st Class Gregory White, HHC, 2nd BSTB, served as the master of ceremony and said this:

"The gate of fire symbolizes the tradition of the Spartan army when young warriors would pass through the gate as a right of passage from childhood to warrior. Today this gate of fire symbolizes the right of passage for the newly promoted NCOs of the Spartan Battalion from the ranks of the junior enlisted to the Corps of the Noncommissioned Officer. The seven torches represent the seven Army values - values that all professional NCOs must possess."



(Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Kap Kim 2-1 Cav. Public Affairs)

**Sgt. Gaston Gray (right), HHC, 2nd BCT, 1st Cav. Div., tries to put an M-4 rifle back together blind-folded as Staff Sgt. Yamil Villafane, HHC, 2nd BSTB, tries to motivate him during the NCO induction ceremony on Forward Operating Base Prosperity in Baghdad April 10.**



# Why can't we all live by the same rules?

Double standards.

As I get older, I get amazed at how much worse they get every year between men and women.

If a woman enjoys being physically fit, men get intimidated and tell her that she's too masculine, but for a man you can't work out too much. If she chops off her hair or (God forbid) shaves her head, she must be playing for the other team, but look at the men in the military. It's the standard.

The last time I checked, women aren't allowed to belch, pass gas, scratch inappropriate places, smell, or go number two - or at least not admit it.

Oh... believe me it doesn't stop there. (Stop me if I am lying.) In the dating world, if women give too much they are too easy, if they give too little their prudes. Don't even think about dating more than one man at a time.

The world is full of these double standards, and I ran into one in a movie that I don't often see. In Universal Picture's "Prime" a woman is dating a much younger man.

Let me define much younger. Rafi (our main character played by Uma

## Movie Buff

By Sgt.  
Nicole  
Kojetin



Thurman) is a 37-year-old recent divorcee falling for Dave (Bryan Greenburg) a 23-year-old painter. Let me do that math for you; that is a 14-year difference. I tell you what, if I was single and 37, that would be the route I go, too.

Granted if the genders were flipped around, men would be patting him on the back telling him to go for the gold. You know... when the wife gets too old, trade her in. Hugh Hefner is a prime example.

But no, her friends tell her that he is too young and she will never get what she needs from him. She is convinced of it, too. His best friend tells him that she is ancient. Dave's mom, played by Meryl Streep exclaims in protest when he lies and says that his girl is 27.

Why is this? Where did it come from? Is it because women can't make babies when they are 60 and men still can? Do

men always want someone fertile around them for spreading their seed? Somebody, please, fill me in.

Sorry, got off track again.

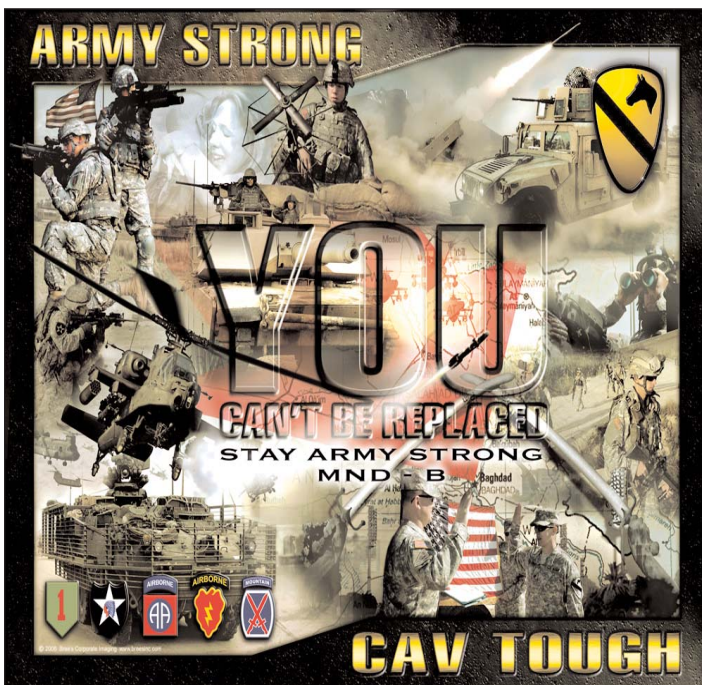
Rafi and Dave started out their relationship trying to overcome their age difference. The cards were definitely stacked against them and it was only going to get worse.

The interesting and funny twist of the movie is that Rafi's therapist, the woman she has been sharing all her dirty relationship details with, happens to be Dave's mom. This brings on some comical, awkward scenes with an over-the-top dramatic Streep.


I can't go into much more detail without giving away the whole thing, so I will stop there. It is another chick flick, but over my past few months here, I have realized that many guys like chick flicks, too.

This movie isn't hilarious, but it did make me laugh out loud a few times. It is no "Kill Bill," but Uma Thurman fans will definitely enjoy it.

(3 out of 5 golden spurs!)



**OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM**



**THIS TENT BURNED TO THE GROUND IN 12 SECONDS. WITHIN 60 SECONDS, FOUR MORE TENTS WERE TOTALLY DESTROYED DUE TO FAULTY WIRING.**

**LESSONS LEARNED**

- ✓ DO NOT LEAVE SPACE HEATERS, IMMERSION HEATERS, IRONS OR OTHER ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES UNATTENDED FOR ANY PERIOD OF TIME, NO MATTER HOW SHORT. **TURN THEM OFF WHEN YOU LEAVE.**
- ✓ TOUCH THE ELECTRICAL CORDS. IF THEY ARE WARM OR HOT TO THE TOUCH YOU HAVE INADEQUATE POWER TO SUPPLY THE APPLIANCE. **UNPLUG IT IMMEDIATELY!**
- ✓ DO NOT COOK IN YOUR TENT. NOT ONLY IS IT A MAJOR CAUSE OF FIRES, COOKING ATTRACTS RODENTS.
- ✓ ENSURE THAT YOUR TENT HAS A 10LB, ABC, FIRE EXTINGUISHER AND THAT ALL OCCUPANTS KNOW HOW TO USE IT.

**STAY ALERT --- STAY ALIVE**